



GUACANAGARI	PONTIAC	BLACK HAWK
MONTEZUMA	CAPTAIN PIPE	KEOKUK
QUATIMOTZIN	LOGAN	SACAGAWEA
POWHATAN	CORNPLANTER	BENITO JUAREZ
POCAHONTAS	JOSEPH BRANT	MANGUS
SAMOSSET	RED JACKET	COLORADAS
MASSASOIT	LITTLE TURTLE	LITTLE CROW
KING PHILIP	TECUMSEH	SITTING BULL
UNCAS	OSCEOLA	CHIEF JOSEPH
TEDVUSKUNG	SEQUOYA	GERONIMO
	SHABONEE	



TO PERPETUATE THE HISTORY
AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE
PEOPLE REPRESENTED BY THE
ABOVE CHIEFS AND WISE MEN
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1911



The Indian—Federal and State Responsibility:*

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GOOD many years ago a superintendent of Indian schools had an Indian Service institute to which all were urged to come and several persons were invited to contribute papers. There were six addresses of welcome and as many responses delivered, most all of them beautiful verbal bouquets, after which, there being a little time remaining before that stage was reached when the laudatory resolutions the appointed chairman had prepared were to be read, and adopted as read, a few papers were presented. Earlier in the year when several persons had been asked to prepare these papers they were at the same time requested to send copies to the superintendent in advance. I did not realize the import of the last portion of this request until the place of meeting was reached and one gentleman showed me what remained of his paper after it had been censored and emasculated. My production had not been completed until about time to take the train so it went to the reading desk unrevised. This failure to have the objectionable expressions deleted made a lot of trouble; for presuming the conference to be a free clearing house for ideas I had written down those which occurred to me and presented them for what consideration they were worth. The consideration they were accorded was—and I speak advisedly—something fierce. The distinguished superintendent called me to a curtain lecture that was hair-raising for daring to say anything that it had not been intended by those in charge of the conference should be said. The rebuke closed with the statement that plans looking to my promotion must be changed, as I had manifested a sad lack of discretion as well as of ability to keep my ear to the ground.

I am sure that this is a different sort of deliberative assembly and that the leaders will, if my doctrine is believed to be unorthodox, choose to pulverize it rather than the honest though perhaps illogical author.

*A paper read at the conference of Indian Workers at San Francisco, August 10, 1915.

The expression, "The Indian—Federal and State Responsibility," used to describe the matter under consideration, suggests to us that in their relation to the Indian both the Nation and the several States of his residence must take credit or blame as he is saved or damned. In the past he has been exclusively a Federal problem; at present his welfare seems the subject of both Federal and State interest, and in the not distant future it appears that the States will become the sole guardian so far as one is required.

It should be observed at this time that we in all probability are not in harmony as to the definition of an Indian. A few years ago there came into existence an organization of great influence and usefulness in which none but Indians may be active members. Persons who are one-half, three-fourths, seven-eighths, fifteen-sixteenths, or thirty-one thirty-seconds white are eligible to active membership. This fact indicates that in the eyes of this organization the possession of any percentage of native blood constitutes Indianhood. Such a definition generally accepted would insure us an Indian question for many generations. It would mean that anybody may be of that race from the Mojave racing through the mesquite trees arrayed in a gee string with his hair done up in Colorado River mud to the blonde princesses who twang their harps before New England groups of sentimentalists and tell the sad history of "my people," said people as aborigines being entirely mythical. It is extremely frequent that the most pitiful and moving tales about the wrongs of "my tribe" are recited by those who have never been accepted by any tribe, have no tribe connecton, and are professional Indians because being such is a lucrative business.

You may have heard in comparatively recent days of an "Indian Joan of Arc" going up and down the land with a pale-face consort pleading for the rights of her people. Who are her people and what is their status? Indians, yes, but clothed with every right that any American citizen possesses except that an attempt has been made by statute and regulation to keep white people aided by the brighter members of the tribe from stealing or buying for a song the roof from over the heads of the less competent. It is true that a State statute forbade the sale of liquor to them, but such special legislation, while well meaning, was unconstitutional and inoperative. It is my understanding that other champions of the liberties of the Indian have demanded that the legislature formally repeal this attempted abridgement of the privileges of the native American.

In Oklahoma there are one hundred thousand members of the so-called Five Civilized Tribes, running the scale of civilization from Crazy Snake to members of Congress and Register of the United States Treasury—two of them. In color they vary from almost ebony to the most pronounced strawberry blonde. In shrewdness there is all the variance from the poor

simpleton who will sell a million dollars worth of oil for a quart of whiskey to the one who is giving points to an astute ex-leader of Tammany Hall. Three-fourths of this one hundred thousand people have no earthly business to be looking to the Government for any special consideration and should be ashamed to class themselves as Indians for any advantage that is expected to be gained thereby. Many of them, it is only fair to state, do not desire different treatment from that accorded other citizens.

In the Osage nation some of the most dissipated and worthless of the tribe are the princes and princesses who, while clinging to their Indian rights and privileges with a tenacity that would be admirable if devoted to a better cause, infest the towns about the reservation too indolent to do anything more laborious than the pressing the button on the starter of an automobile. Many are two white to be recognized as Indians, but still the Government maintains expensive machinery for administering their affairs. They are invariably dissatisfied with what is being done for them, mainly because money is not always forthcoming with sufficient regularity to keep up their expensive establishments.

A number of years ago I was detailed to make allotments to a northern band of Chippewas numbering about twenty-three hundred, only two hundred twenty-five of whom were full bloods. All the remainder of the band were mixed-bloods descended largely from the French trappers of Canada. Hundreds of them gave little evidence, if any, of Indian origin and the native tongue was French. After the Riel rebellions in Canada had been quelled the Dominion Government settled with its mixed-bloods and notified them that nothing would be coming to them as Indians. They then transferred their residence to our side of the border and began a new campaign for land and money in this country. They are now counted with us, great numbers of them, and are a portion of our responsibility.

Returning to the Five Civilized Tribes, it should be mentioned that twenty-six hundred whites, intermarried, were treated by the Government as Indians, so eager have we been to have a really big problem; and all know, who know anything about it, that one white man made over into an Indian can make fifty-seven varieties of trouble to every one created by the genuine article.

What do you think of this definition of an Indian?

One whose father is a full-blood or both of whose parents are not less than one-half Indian.

If you refuse to endorse it you must make your own and defend it, but my assumption that it is so reasonable that you are in agreement with me. If so, we can at this juncture eliminate from special, Federal, or State interest and responsibility in the neighborhood of one hundred thousand that are now being counted and looked after as Indians. It is prob-

ably no exaggeration to state that from this portion of the population originate nine-tenths of the demands for greater consideration that are pouring in unending flow into the various departments in Washington. We should have courage to let loose of these people and allow or even force them to swim alone, even though it should make the census shrink terribly, cause the problem to appear comparatively insignificant, lessen the need of special machinery, take magnitude and consequent impressiveness from our work and even threaten the existence of our cherished jobs.

Of the Indian population falling within the definition above, a very large class have attended the many schools, Government, mission, and public, that are open to them and have there gained training of mind and hand that makes them stronger for meeting the issues of civilized life than the average non-Indian. Scan the lists of graduates of our schools for the race, visit the colleges of the land, and you will discover hundreds every year that are equipped in everything unless it be courage and the power to stick to render not only good but even distinguished service to society. They have had that contact with the Caucasian by virtue of which they can measure power with him and know that they are his equal. This being true, and you know it to be true, why should there be for him such a special problem? He can live and thrive if he is willing to work, and no person has a right to live who will not persist in exercising to a reasonable degree the powers given him by his Maker and cultivated through the instrumentalities provided by parents or society. He will work. He may not when first turned loose with an unearned property to squander, if he has such, but just wait until he feels the spur of privation. Many of you know, as I know, from hard experience, that it is not comfortable to be extremely poor; but that condition beats all other known inducements to hustle.

The country is full of young Indians with superior training who are marking time about the agencies and the towns around them and deteriorating daily while waiting for an expectancy from the Government. It may be a patent in fee to land, it may be a portion of a capitalized trust fund, it may be a share in royalties collected and disbursed by the department, or it may be the hope that a treaty broken years ago will be redeemed and something realized therefrom. Shall we not put an end to such an enervating condition, give these young people every cent coming to them, discount their expectancy, and turn them loose, knowing that henceforth they will have all that they earn and nothing more? This disposes of another larger body for whom the Government is responsible now in so far as it continues the degenerating policy of holding back something that constitutes a basis for the hope to live without work, and greatly simplifies and reduces the task of the Nation and State. I am aware of the existence of that considerable body of people who, moved by

sentiments of the most lofty order, contend that we are greatly indebted to these earlier inhabitants because we have dispossessed them and broken many treaties made with them. These good people never fail to wake the echoes from California to Washington if an Indian, no matter how shiftless he may be, is reported hungry. The dispossession and the broken agreements must be admitted, but there is no power that can restore the old order. Whatever debt is yet unliquidated must be discharged by making this formerly unenlightened people a part of the most wonderful civilization known, to be a part of which for a generation is a blessing worth more than centuries of unenlightened existence.

Having turned loose the whites, masquerading as Indians, the blue-eyed, fair haired, and blonde Indians and those of darker color who have been taught to walk alone, effort can be concentrated on those who have not yet enjoyed educational advantages sufficient to give them proficiency in any occupation, whose contact with white men has not been intimate enough to make them able to compete with him. Such are the adult, uneducated full-bloods and their children that are found on the reservations or former reservations like the Navajo, Pima, Papago, Mojave, Zuni, Cherokee, or Creek. They are our proper responsibility and must be as long as any remain. Even with them there should be a constantly lessening control as they are able to assume charge of their own affairs.

An expensive organization is being maintained wherever there are allotments or funds to look after, for however little attention we pay to the Indian as a human being we are most assiduously caring for his property, preserving it, leasing it, collecting his rents and royalties, helping him to invest his money, and in general putting off as long as possible the day when he will have to sweat. Our Indian farmers, as a rule, have little to do with actual farming. For every one busy in teaching the adult how to make the best use of his resources there are a half dozen actively engaged in assisting him to scrape along with the property he has, coupled with the industry of a usually poor grade of lessees. Were the leasing business abandoned except in so far as it has to do with the guardianship of the mentally or physically immature or infirm it should prove a most efficient incentive to industry. Do not understand that a reduced organization is at this time advocated. It should rather be increased *now* that it may be abandoned *soon*. However, the increase should not be in the form of more poorly paid and therefore usually incompetent teachers of industry. It would be vastly better to pay liberal salaries and require from the recipients much greater ability and industry than is now displayed, and have it *all* exercised along the line of real live leadership and instruction in making best use of the resources in hand. Once while temporarily connected with an agency it was necessary for me to stand by without permission to do anything and witness

the waste of hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of the resources of a tribe of Indians without there being any attempt made to teach the mastery of the calling involved. The man put in charge of this gigantic enterprise swore upon the witness stand in my hearing that he had no practical knowledge of the business which he controlled by the Government order. How long do you think it would take such teachers to place a tribe of full-bloods upon an independent economic footing, able to handle wisely the millions of dollars' worth of property belonging to them? If you had a few billion feet of timber, for example, would you be contented for the free hand to be given men who were without experience in either logging, lumbering, or any other allied business to handle not only the timber but several hundred thousand dollars in money previously accumulated? When men competent to handle and teach the business can be secured they should be used to the end that in fullness of time the native owner may be fitted to displace the hired man. Our job is often so badly bungled that it is a wonder to me that we can look an Indian or a salary check in the face without a consciousness of guilt. We may rest assured that no considerable advance toward independence can be made by those dependent people until they have been taught in class rooms, in shops, on the farm, in the lumber camps, on the range, or wherever it may be by experts who are interested in imparting their knowledge to their pupils, be they children or adults. Let the profession of a high conception of responsibility be reduced to practice.

While redeeming every promise made in the past and while protecting the hopeless element composed of the old and otherwise feeble in mind or body, we should make a supreme endeavor to get hold of all young, with their consent if possible, without it if necessary, put them in proper environment and give them throughout the years of their youth efficient schooling—not for a term of three years, but until manhood and womanhood is reached. This should be supplemented by strong industrial training after formal school days are ended. A follow-up program will be futile unless committed to a sufficient body of able and interested men and women, and the work of the schools will be made fruitful to the highest degree only if such a program is adopted.

When the Indian has been placed in a position where economic independence is possible, by the method described above, give him command of all his resources to use or misuse, and let him enjoy or suffer the consequences. The adoption of this course will be hard on any plans for the perpetuity of the Indian business, but it is my belief that whatever makes for permanency of the Federal system of supervision or control is destructive to those for whom its activities are continued.

Thus far I have discussed almost exclusively the relation of the Federal Government to the Indian because practically all plans looking

to the amelioration of his condition have had their inception with the National Interior Department. The States have exhibited very little concern for his welfare so far, their concern with respect to him being chiefly that his property be listed for taxation at the earliest possible date. In more than one State have the courts refused him their relief for no other reason than that he did not contribute to the revenues. Indians have been permitted to live without regard to marriage laws and in various other ways offend society, and offenders against them, even to murder, have gone unpunished for no better excuse than officials declined to use for their benefit any portion of the public funds. In many localities, and the number is constantly growing, it is true that the copper colored children are being allowed the privileges of the public schools, but most of those attending are the lighter colored and more advanced.

The present indifference of most of the States to the interests of this portion of their population teaches us that they will become active in their behalf only when all reservations have been broken up, the lands added to the tax rolls, the families distributed among the general citizenship, and a fair degree of advancement been attained.

Let the General Government, then, by all possible means strengthen and hurry its primary educational program, making the care of property which now receives the lion's share of attention and therefore operates as an efficient bar to progress, subordinate to the development of humanity, bringing quickly the day when the entire responsibility in this matter may in safety be bequested to the several States. When that can be done there will no longer be an Indian problem any more than there exists an Irish problem among us, the commonwealths having only the duty of seeing that no "grandfather clause" legislation is attempted, but that all citizenship of whatever race or color *and without respect to race or color* be accorded equal rights and equal opportunity.



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